

**Submission  
No 85**

## **HEALTH SERVICES AMENDMENT (SPLITTING OF THE HUNTER NEW ENGLAND HEALTH DISTRICT) BILL 2025**

**Organisation:** Tamworth Regional Council

**Date Received:** 28 April 2025

Mr Clayton Barr  
Committee Chair  
Legislative Assembly Committee on Community  
Services  
[communityservices@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:communityservices@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Mr Barr

**SUBMISSION – HEALTH SERVICES AMENDMENT (SPLITTING OF THE HUNTER NEW ENGLAND HEALTH DISTRICT) BILL 2025**

Ref: kl/RW

Thank you for allowing Council to extend our submission until 30 April 2025 to consider this important issue.

Council supports the intent of the *Health Services Amendment (Splitting of the Hunter New England Health District) Bill 2025*, which would divide the current health district and re-create the former New England Area Health Service, headquartered in Tamworth, servicing the entire New England North West area.

Council is not confident this Bill will in itself solve all of the health care issues in our region, however, Council does firmly believe that health care decisions related to our large and diverse region should be made by a body that is connected to, and resides within, the region and not in Newcastle.

The Hunter New England Health District is an enormous region that stretches from Newcastle to the Queensland border. HNEH attempts to service 25 local government areas, with a combined population of more than 950,000 people and is the only health district in the State that is expected to deliver rural and remote services from a metropolitan base. Council believes the current approach where all of our residents are diverted to the John Hunter Hospital in Newcastle for specialist care has resulted in the gradual but consistent decline of our local hospitals.

Councillors have also heard firsthand from our local hardworking nurses and health professionals, many patients and the broader community that they are disappointed with the city-centric attitude of the Newcastle-based health district management. In particular, the systematic downgrading of staff and the extensive use of locums in our emergency departments is a primary concern.

The passing of the subject Bill will be an important first step in improving health care across the New England North West region.

Yours faithfully

Russell Webb  
**Mayor**

Contact: Russell Webb

28 April 2025